

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NASA-01 NSC-05 ERDA-05 /047 W

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R 030607Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8410

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1407

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: EFIN

SUBJECT: ACCESS TO NASA STATION

1. DURING PAST FEW WEEKS, EMBASSY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER VISITED NASA STATION FOUR TIMES AT REQUEST OF FOREIGN MINISTRY IN ORDER TO RESTORE TEMPORARILY-INTERRUPTED WATER SUPPLY TO NEARBY VILLAGE OF IMERINTSIATOSIKA, WHICH DRAWS ITS WATER FROM SYSTEM INSTALLED BY NASA WHEN STATION WAS FIRST ESTABLISHED. ADMIN OFFICER WAS ACCOMPANIED ON EACH OCCASION BY REPRESENTATIVES OF GENDARMERIE, MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, AND MALAGASY WATER AND ELECTRICITY COMPANY, AS WELL AS BY SEVERAL MALAGASY EMPLOYEES OF EMBASSY WHO ASSISTED WITH REPAIRS. EACH TIME, REPAIR WAS DELAYED BECAUSE KEYS TO WATER SYSTEM ARE LOCATED IN NASA BUILDING AND, BECAUSE OF UNCERTAIN STATUS OF THE STATION AND SENSITIVITIES WITHIN THE GDRM, ACCESS TO NASA BUILDING HAD TO GO THROUGH CONSIDERABLE RED TAPE. ALTHOUGH REQUESTS BY GDRM HAVE RESULTED IN CONSIDERABLE LOSS OF EMBASSY WORKING TIME, WE HAVE DEMONSTRATED OUR GOOD WILL AND WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH GDRM AUTHORITIES.

2. ON AUGUST 31 EMBASSY RECEIVED MFA NOTE REQUESTING THAT WE PROVIDE WATER COMPANY WITH KEYS TO THE WATER SYSTEM. WE COULD DO SO BY REQUESTING ACCESS TO NASA BUILDING AND (A) GIVE GDRM KEYS OUTRIGHT OR (B) MAKE COPIES OF KEYS FOR WATER COMPANY WHILE RETAINING SET FOR OURSELVES, THUS NOT ABANDONING PRINCIPLE THAT ALL FACILITIES AT THE STATION

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STILL BELONG TO THE USG.

3. TWICE SINCE NASA STATION WAS CLOSED IN JULY 1975, WE HAVE REQUESTED AND RECEIVED GDRM PERMISSION TO ENTER STATION IN ORDER TO RETRIEVE SPECIFIC ITEMS WHICH WERE PERSONAL PROPERTY OF NASA EMPLOYEES. ON AUGUST 27 WE SENT NOTE TO MFA REQUESTING ACCESS TO THE STATION IN ORDER TO RETRIEVE A LARGE NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS, INCLUDING PERSONAL EFFECTS, AIR MADAGASCAR BILLS WHICH ARE STILL UNPAID, AMERICAN FLAG, NUMEROUS TOOLS AND SUPPLIES FOR AMERICAN VEHICLES WHICH COULD BE USED FOR EMBASSY VEHICLES, ALL VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS FOR NASA VEHICLES NOW LOCATED OFF THE STATION (IN ORDER TO SELL VEHICLES), AND VARIOUS MEDICAL AND OFFICE SUPPLIES WHICH WE COULD ALSO PUT TO GOOD USE. MFA DIRECTOR OF BILATERAL AFFAIRS HAS ASSURED US THAT HE WILL EXPEDITE GDRM'S, I.E. SUPREME REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL'S, APPROVAL OF OUR REQUEST, AND HE DOES NOT EXPECT THAT THERE WILL BE ANY PROBLEM.

4. IF DEPARTMENT HAS NO OBJECTION, EMBASSY PLANS TO PROVIDE GDRM WITH DUPLICATE KEYS, WHICH WE WOULD SEND OVER WITH NOTE REAFFIRMING PRINCIPLE THAT FACILITIES ON BASE AND EQUIPMENT STILL BELONG TO USG AND THAT USG OFFICIALS SHOULD BE PRESENT IF MALAGASY OFFICIALS FIND IT NECESSARY TO OPEN ANY NASA BUILDINGS IN ORDER TO SERVICE WATER SYSTEM. HOWEVER, AS QUID PRO QUO, WE DO NOT PLAN TO PROVIDE KEYS UNLESS GDRM ACCEDES TO OUR REQUEST FOR ACCESS TO STATION TO RECOVER ITEMS MENTIONED ABOVE.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS. SHEINBAUM

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